

incidents which could have resulted in the initiation of debarment proceedings:

In 2007, a \$1.1 million settlement for alleged over billing for aircraft parts.

In 2006, a \$30 million payment to settle claims that the nearly 100 neighbors of the Santa Susana Field nuclear research facility were sickened by decades of radioactive and toxic contamination. The settlement, which ended an 8-year legal battle, was supposed to remain confidential, but one of the plaintiffs divulged the terms to the local media.

In 2004, a \$615 million settlement to resolve the Darleen Druyun scandal and other pending investigations.

In 2003, an \$18 million settlement for alleged violations of the Arms Export Control Act and the International Traffic in Arms Regulation, a settlement to the Boeing company.

In 2003, a \$6 million settlement for violations of the Arms Export Control Act, involving further transfer of data to China.

In 2003, a \$4 million fine for violations of the Arms Export Control Act and the International Traffic in Arms Regulation.

In 2003, a \$2.5 million settlement for alleged defective pricing.

In 2003, a \$490,000 settlement for a quit tam action for alleged false claims.

Additionally, Boeing business units were suspended from receiving new Federal contracts from July 24, 2003, to March 4, 2005. The suspensions were based on a pending criminal investigation into Boeing's unlawful possession and use of a competitor's proprietary documents in connection with the competition for a U.S. Air Force contract. Under the bill as introduced, this involvement would have resulted in automatic debarment proceedings.

I was certain my colleagues would not have wanted that, and after I pointed this out, they realized it was not realistic. But not only would Boeing be affected, other Federal contractors with comparable records of involvement with the legal and administrative remedies available to the government would have been similarly impacted. This is not a sign contractors are all corrupt, it is a sign the system is working and bad behavior is being rooted out.

It is difficult to argue against contracting officers having available to them information concerning concluded State and Federal civil, criminal and administrative proceedings resulting in findings of fault and fines as well as Federal suspensions, debarments, and default terminations. The value of placing such information on a public Web site isn't clear unless it would be to punish or intimidate firms, so I continue to believe our time would have been better spent on legislation to improve our acquisition system.

This bill, while much improved, and while I support it, will do little to improve the government's ability to get

the best value goods and services it needs at fair and reasonable prices.

With that said, I thank Chairman WAXMAN, Mrs. MALONEY and the staff for their willingness to work with us and the Armed Services Committee to make this a better bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) who is the person who sponsored the bill and has done some tremendous work.

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Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his hard work on so many important issues to the great city of New York and our country.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3033, the Contractor and Federal Spending Accountability Act, legislation I have authored to help bring integrity and accountability to the Federal procurement system. I want to thank Chairman WAXMAN and Ranking Member DAVIS, Chairman TOWNS and their staffs, and my own staff, for working so hard on this legislation.

The bill before us today has been modified from the version reported out by the committee to address concerns raised by some Members, including Ranking Member DAVIS. I want to thank him for his positive efforts on this bill, and for many positive efforts he has given to this committee in working in a collaborative way, and express my regret that he is retiring this year from this body.

Also, the concerns of the Chamber of Commerce have been addressed in the underlying bill. H.R. 3033, as amended, will fortify the current Federal suspension and debarment system by establishing a centralized and comprehensive database on actions taken against Federal contractors and assist participants requiring a description of each of these actions.

While the government has several separate information systems, currently there is no centralized comprehensive database for contracting officers to review prior performance and to review information on contractors before making an award or an additional contract award to contractors.

It requires the contracting officer to document why a prospective awardee is deemed responsible if that awardee has two or more offenses which would be cause for debarment within a 3-year period. H.R. 3033, as amended, specifies and clarifies that a "concluded" proceeding is one in which there is a finding of fault on the part of the person and the payment of restitution to a Federal or State government of \$5,000 or more.

Additionally, it improves and clarifies the role of the Interagency Committee on Debarments and Suspension, and requires the administrator of General Services to report to Congress within 180 days with recommendations for further action to create the database.

This legislation has been strongly and consistently supported by the Campaign for Quality Construction and the Project on Government Oversight.

Currently the Federal Government's watchdogs, the Federal suspension and debarment officials, lack the information that they need to protect our business interests and taxpayers' dollars.

This system will give government procurement officers who are making these decisions more information about the qualifications and track records of the contractors. Beyond a listing of currently debarred or suspended persons, officials are now limited to their individual agency's knowledge of an entity's track record. This bill will make it easier for these procurement officers to prevent them giving contracts to those who repeatedly violate Federal laws or have poor performance, and it will prevent them from receiving future dollars from the Federal Government.

As a New York City councilwoman, I successfully led an effort to reform the contracting system of New York City. Included in that effort was a Vendex system which checked the backgrounds and the work of the contractors before awarding contracts. It has been credited with saving the city of New York hundreds of millions of dollars.

The United States is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world, spending more than \$419 billion on procurement awards in 2006, and over \$440 billion on grants in 2005. It is Congress's responsibility to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and not wasted, certainly not wasted in our contracting system, and we should not be giving awards to contractors who have poor performance records.

I believe by improving the system for awarding contracts, I believe that this is critical for boosting the public's faith in our government and it will save taxpayers' dollars. I urge my colleagues to support this reform bill.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. I yield 5 minutes to the chairman of the full committee, the Honorable HENRY WAXMAN from the great State of California.

Mr. WAXMAN. I thank the gentleman from the great State of New York, the able chairman of the subcommittee, for yielding to me.

H.R. 3033, as amended, would create a centralized governmentwide database of information to more effectively monitor the award of Federal tax dollars. It would include not only information on companies and grantees that have been debarred by the Federal Government, but also information on civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings that have been concluded against contractors and grant recipients.

No such comprehensive database currently exists, and creating one would allow more efficient monitoring of Federal procurement and assistance programs.